



QARG Money Awarded

The following project submissions were selected to receive funding from the Network 2 QARG grant money. Grant monies total \$300,000.

- Service Animal Therapy - **Dr. Barbara Bates** (Albany)
- BCMA Equipment - **Patricia Lind** (Canandaigua/ Rochester)
- Brachytherapy - **Laurie Hoffman-Hogg** (Albany)
- Endoscopy Simulator - **Sherry Van Horn** (VISN MVAC) and **Dr. Thomas Mahl** (WNY)
- Entrepreneurial Ventures - **Kevin O'Hagan** (VISN Voc. Services)
- Visually Impaired Software - **Dr. Diane Wonch** (WNY)
- Hypertension Research - **Dr. Krishna Sharma**, (Canandaigua/Rochester).

Veterans Service Center Call Center

In January the Veterans Service Center opened its new call center. Veterans can now phone with questions about health benefits, eligibility, and billing toll free. The correct number is:

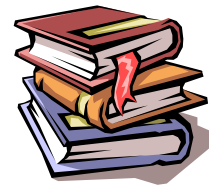
1-888-823-9656

Appointments

- In addition to his normal responsibilities as Diagnostics and Therapeutics (D & T) Careline Manager at Canandaigua, **Tom Wisnieski** has been named Acting, D & T Careline Manager at Bath for a period of 90 days.
- **Sharon Panasiewicz** has joined Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, VA Western New York Healthcare System as a Program Support Assistant.

Network 2 VA Academic Support Program

The Network Education Office is offering the Network 2 VA Academic Support Program for Fiscal year 2003. All courses must begin prior to September 30, 2003. Applications are due in local education offices on the following dates:



- March 14, 2003 - for classes beginning May 2003 - August 2003
- July 18, 2003 - for classes beginning August 2003 - September 30, 2003

Financial support will be provided up to a maximum of \$1,000.00 per fiscal year based on availability of funds for any full or part time, permanent employee/applicant (pro-rated for part time employees) who has one year of continuous service and fully satisfactory performance.

Funding will be awarded to those individuals taking an academic degree program or specialty certification program for which there is an identified existing or projected need within the Network. Specific job-related courses within non-shortage disciplines may also be approved based on the availability of funds.

The award includes tuition and related educational expenses. All employees incur a service obligation based upon the dollar amount awarded. Forms can be found on the intranet at:

vaww.visn2.med.va.gov/emp/learning/academicsupport.html

VA Salutes Guardsmen and Reservists

The following are excerpts from a speech the Honorable **Anthony J. Principi**, Secretary of Veterans Affairs gave at a special event in Washington, DC on February 12.

"...now is the time to recognize and give thanks to our friends and colleagues all across VA - who are members of America's National Guard and Reserve forces...I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that our Nation stands as tall as we do - sees as far as we see - dreams the great dreams we dream - and achieves noble goals - because we have been gifted with men and women of commitment and courage willing to lay down their lives, if need be, to advance our country's righteous cause.

In war, and throughout our times of blessed peace, National Guardsmen and Reservists have borne their duty to country with high honor and, all too often, with the greatest sacrifice. For 367 years, the National Guard has stood the long, and often dangerous watch over the ramparts of Democracy. From the American Revolution to the War on Terrorism, the men and women of the National Guard have strengthened Freedom's hand on her unsheathed sword of justice. And when the forces of nature ravage our communities and threaten our lives, it is the Guard's gentle hands that pluck us from danger and lovingly protect and restore our neighborhoods.

America relies on the ready commitment of her Reservists to take up liberty's cause whenever and wherever tyrants threaten the peace of the world. Whether in the cockpits of our frontline fighters, on the decks of our fighting ships, or in the turrets of our main battle tanks, Reservists serve notice to hostile regimes that American men and women are ready and willing to put aside their everyday lives - to put their families and their professions on hold - to beat down the flames of war.

I can only say this: should your time come to be tested in the fiery crucible of battle, you will pass that test with flying colors.

Your service to our Nation's veterans has already defined your commitment to selfless duty, and I am confident that no matter where you may serve, or in what capacity, you will bring honor to yourselves, to your family and community, to VA, and to America.

I commend every VA employee who stands ready to move out at Liberty's clarion call; your duty to country extends the legacy of 25 million living veterans who, in their time, stood tall in the face of the whirlwind of war and brought home the blessing of peace."



Awards and Recognition



- The American Psychiatry Association promoted **Dr. Donald Banzhaf**, Staff Psychiatrist at the Rochester VA Outpatient Clinic to the category of Distinguished Fellows.

- **Dr. Kerry Z. Donnelly**, Psychologist, VA Western New York Healthcare System has been approved to become a senior member of the graduate faculty at the University at Buffalo, Department of Counseling, School and Educational Psychology Graduate School of Education.

Retiring

Barbara Fowler, local Diagnostics and Therapeutics Careline Manager in Bath is retiring at the end of February. Barb has worked for the Bath VA for more than 32 years.

New Hires

- The Behavioral Health VA Careline welcomes the following new employees in Canandaigua: **Dr. Angelina Dharan**, **Krista Stephenson**, NM and **Shari Record**, RN.
- **Bob Kasprzak** joined the Canandaigua VA Medical Center as a Financial Accounts Technician.